

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

NSC-05 SS-15 PM-04 /056 W
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R 121009Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3704

INFO AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UK

SUBJECT: CLOSING OF BRITISH DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS

AT TAIL END OF LENGTHY DISCUSSION WITH NORMAN ASPIN, FCO ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY FOR AFRICA, EMBASSY OFFICER MENTIONED HE HAD HEARD THAT THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN TANANARIVE WAS DUE TO CLOSE. ASPIN, REPLYING "OFF-THE-RECORD," CONFIRMED THE REPORT. HE SAID THAT BUDGET CUTS HAD IN FACT FORCED THE FCO TO SCHEDULE FOUR EMBASSY CLOSURES THIS YEAR: TANANARIVE, LOME, TEGUCIGALPA, AND MANAGUA. BECAUSE BOTH THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS OF THE BRITISH ECONOMY ARE NOW BEING CALLED UPON TO REDUCE EXPENDITURES, EACH GOVERNMENT MINISTRY HAS BEEN REQUIRED TO CUT BACK COSTS BY FIVE PERCENT. FOR THE FCO, IT IS A HARD KNOCK, COMING ONLY A FEW YEARS AFTER A 12 PERCENT REDUCTION IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE DUNCAN REPORT. STAFF REDUCTIONS ARE THE ONLY POSSIBLE MEANS OF LOWERING COSTS, ASPIN SAID, AND THE FOUR SMALL EMBASSIES ARE THE MOST FEASIBLE. ASPIN LAMENTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND TREASURY WERE APPARENTLY INCAPABLE OF ARRANGING PRIORITIES THROUGHOUT THE VARIOUS MINISTRIES AND HAD INSTEAD RESORTED TO A STRAIGHT FIVE PERCENT CUT ACROSS-THE-BOARD. EM-

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BASSY OFFICER REPLIED THAT SUCH AN UNIMAGINATIVE APPROACH

TO BUDGET REDUCTIONS WAS UNHEARD OF IN WASHINGTON.

RICHARDSON

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Message Attributes

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